

APPLICANTS: Gelardi et al.
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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A container, comprising:

a tube having a rim at one end defining an opening, and

an endcap including a channel that is shaped to receive the tube rim, the tube including at least one latching aperture positioned such that when the tube rim is seated in the channel, the latching aperture is contained within the channel,

the endcap further including a latching member that engages the latching aperture when the tube rim is seated in the receiving channel, the latching member including a surface shaped so as to deflect the tube rim to allow the tube rim to be slid into position over the latching member,

the endcap further including a first guide assembly on a first side of the latching member and a second guide assembly on a second side of the latching member, each of the first and second guide assemblies including a surface shaped to deflect the tube rim in a direction opposite to the deflection of the tube rim by the latching member when the tube rim is slid into position in the channel, and to maintain the engagement of the latching aperture by the latching member when the tube rim is seated in the channel, wherein there is formed in the wall opposite the first guide assembly a first cavity and wherein there is formed in the wall

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opposite the second guide assembly a second cavity the first and second cavities providing clearance respectively for the first and second guide assemblies.

2. (Original) The container of claim 1, wherein the endcap includes an inner wall and an outer wall, the inner and outer walls extending around the perimeter of the endcap and defining the channel.

3. (Original) The container of claim 2, wherein the outer wall is taller than the inner wall such that a portion of the outer wall extends beyond the inner wall.

4. (Currently Amended) The container of claim 2 ~~or claim 3~~, wherein the latching member extends into the channel from one of the inner and outer walls, and the first and second guide assemblies extend into the channel from the other of the inner and outer walls.

5. (Currently Amended) The container of ~~any of claims 2 to 4~~ claim 2, wherein the latching member extends into the channel from the inner wall, and wherein the first and second guide assemblies extend into the channel from the outer wall.

6. (Currently Amended) The container of claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein the first and second guide assemblies each include a plurality of guide fins.

7. (Currently Amended) The container of claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein the first and second guide assemblies include, respectively, first and second sets of guide fins that are substantially parallel to each other, each of the guide fins including a sloped surface shaped to deflect the tube rim in a direction opposite to the deflection of the tube rim by the latching member when the tube rim is slid into position in the channel, and to

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maintain the engagement of the latching aperture by the latching member when the tube rim is seated in the channel.

8. (Original) The container of claim 7, wherein each of the first and second guide fin assemblies includes three guide fins.

9. (Currently Amended) The container of claim 7 ~~or claim 8~~, wherein there is formed in the wall opposite the first guide fin assembly a first cavity, and wherein there is formed in the wall opposite the second guide fin assembly a second cavity, the first and second cavities providing clearance, respectively, for the first and second sets of guide fins.

10. (Currently Amended) A method for packaging a retail item, comprising:

(a) loading the item into a tube having a rim at one end defining an opening, the tube including at least one latching aperture adjacent the rim;

(b) sliding the tube rim into a receiving channel provided in an endcap, the endcap including a latching member that engages the latching aperture when the tube rim is seated in the receiving channel, the latching member including a surface shaped so as to deflect the tube rim to allow the tube rim to be slid into position over the latching member, the endcap further including a first guide assembly on a first side of the latching member and a second guide assembly on a second side of the latching member, each of the first and second guide assemblies including a surface shaped to deflect the tube rim in a direction opposite to the deflection of the tube rim by the latching member when the tube rim is slid into position in the channel, and to maintain the engagement of the latching aperture by the latching ~~member~~ member when the tube rim is seated in the channel; and

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(c) seating the tube rim in the endcap such that the tube latching aperture is engaged by the latching member.